

An Open Letter
to my Fellow-members of
The Theosophical Society

LETTER NO. 6

MAY 3rd, 1939

DEAR BRETHREN,

I do not hesitate to send you this week an Open Letter which reflects clearly and definitely my own deepest convictions and longings, especially in these times in which it is often so difficult rightly to discriminate.

Each of us has his own convictions which are not in the least degree binding upon his fellow-members, for it is one of the greater glories of membership of The Theosophical Society that acquiescence is only asked from us in great and eternal principles—in the desirability of vivifying the universal brotherhood of humanity (the First Object), in the importance of the comparative study of the religions, philosophies, and the sciences of the world (the Second Object), in the fact that the truths we know are limited and partial

and that we must seek truth ardently (the Third Object). On the other hand, the sincere conviction of every member is of value to every other member. No one can grow through his own convictions alone. Hence there is great value in sharing, in exchanging, convictions. In this letter I am sharing with you my own, not in order that you may agree with them, still less that you may think these convictions have some universal orthodoxy in The Theosophical Society. They have no orthodoxy. They are personal. But the better you know me, especially in my deepest sincerities, the nearer do we draw together in mutually appreciative comradeship.

It is for this reason that I have ventured to disclose myself to you again. If my convictions are of value to you, make use of them. If they do not appeal to you, give them respect, of course, but only the respect due to another point of view. Above all, we must be free. Membership of The Theosophical Society and the study of Theosophy are alike roads to that freedom which we shall attain through self-discovery.

Indeed, every single Open Letter is not a message from the President of The

Theosophical Society in his official capacity, but from the President in his individual capacity, and he hopes that every letter will be duly read as such.

We have in these stirring times a very great opportunity to be clear, definite, direct in our thoughts, desires, feelings, and emotions and activities, and it is very useful for each one of us to examine himself as to the extent he is clear, because only so can he be truly effective.

It is not a question as to whether we are right or wrong. Until we pass beyond the half-way stage of evolution, we are likely to be more right than wrong. The more dogmatic an individual is, the less is he likely to be right. We cannot expect to be right, but we can expect to be clear: knowing in a measure whence we have come, knowing up to a certain point who we are, and finally whither we are really going and what we have to do.

So many people in the world simply drag out their existence, living from one moment to another, from hand to mouth, as it were, with out a single atom of purpose in their lives. They take the next step that needs to be taken with no idea of a

distant goal, often without the idea of a goal at all.

What is *your* positive purpose in life? In these days when there is so much to be done in our own country and throughout the world, it is very vital to know why we are here, what we are here for, what we have to contribute to the well-being of our surroundings, large or small.

You may say: "I know my work is to keep house for my family." Or "I feel it my work to be the helper of so and so." Quite right so long as you are clear that this is your great objective and do it as splendidly as you can. What is wanted is the giving of your service in the world with definiteness and clear-cut-ness. Then you are not drifting, but are doing what is, for the time being at all events, *your* work, *your* mission. Your piece of work, large or small, is being fitted into the Plan. We have the most absurd ideas as to what is or is not real work. How many Theosophists are longing for the time when they can be free to give themselves entirely to The Theosophical Society. Whatever may be our work, small or large, it is through that work that our freedom comes. When we wish we were free, we fail to

realize that in all probability we need our present experience in order to reach that freedom. And our surroundings are the surroundings we need and in which we can most effectively serve and become free for the time being.

I should like to tell you exactly what I feel is the key-note for the true soldier's work in the Masters' Army, the type of soldier who is willing to go anywhere and do anything.

There are two types of soldiers: first, one who is specially able to work along a particular and specific line. Such soldiers are needed, and are employed in their individual capacities. The other type of soldier is able to go anywhere and do anything; sometimes he does his work only indifferently well, but he can be used to fill gaps. I am the latter type of soldier and I will give you the Manual, the Ideal of my soldiery. It is just my own and may have no application to most of my fellow-members. Indeed it may be entirely uncongenial to them. They may well have other Charters for themselves. Yet each of us should have his Charter of great Principles and seek to fulfil it. I am not

able to fulfil mine, but it is the goal towards which I strive :

MY CHARTER

I want to play THE Game, not MY game

" Playing the game " means to be honourable, sportsmanlike in the very best sense of the word. THE Game is the Game of Life, of the Government of the Hierarchy. This is the *motif* of the whole of the Charter.

In these supreme moments of a great period in the history of the world, I want to be very worthy of all the trust my Superiors have reposed in me.

Our Superiors have reposed a great deal of confidence in entrusting to us The Theosophical Society and the spread of Theosophy. We have been given a great Truth, a great Opportunity, a great Power. Let us therefore be very worthy.

I want to be Their man, forgetting myself utterly, remembering Them only.

To be Their *man* is more than being Their servant. It means partly the spirit of service and partly the spirit of

comradeship. It lifts me up to Them and yet keeps me humble.

I want absolutely out of the way all obstacles to my understanding of Their immediate Plan.

I want to know Their Plan face to face, and not darkly through my personal inclinations.

I do not want Their Plan to be obscured by my own personality so that it is dark instead of light to me. I want that their Plan shall as little as possible be dulled to me through my ignorance. I want to know Their Plan face to face.

These, you see of course, are Ideals that we cannot hope to reach at once. But if we are clear as to our Will, then the Will will find the way to help us to reach the Goal in due course. I do not want to see Their Plan distorted by my personal inclinations.

I know I have a share in that Plan, and I want to fulfil my share without fear of anyone, without fear of public opinion, without fear of praise or blame, and without favour to any person, party, principle, or prejudice.

I want to fulfil my share as perfectly as I can, with all the power at my command, all the wisdom, and all the understanding.

I want to fulfil my share without pause and in ceaseless one-pointedness.

I want to be entirely indifferent to rebuff and to all appearances of success.

Day and night I want to be at my post, so that my Superiors will always find me there on duty, and know that neither suffering, nor misjudgement, nor persuasion, nor misery, nor even belieflessness, shall at any time cause me to desert my place in Their Plan.

This is such a vitally important point. Suffering must not deflect me from my place. I do not think the honest soldier would be deflected by suffering. But suppose he is misjudged by many people in whom he has hitherto placed his confidence. Suppose he loses that regard which he believes to be his due. Will all this make any difference to him? Many people depend entirely for their faithfulness to the Masters on the extent to which the Masters' representatives satisfy them. Everybody down here is fallible. We are

only servants of the Masters. It should not matter to you what I do to you or to me what you do to me. We must be found at our posts regardless of all personal relations with each other.

But if we surmount the rock of misjudgement, what about belieflessness? How many of us, if we ceased to believe in the Masters or Theosophy, could still in the spirit of our own higher Selves stand firm at our post, faithful to our work? That is one of the greatest of challenges: can you still work for the Plan, for The Society without any belief? There are the Great, of course, who being placed at Their posts, will never desert them, even though belief may have vanished away and trust may have disappeared. If your Higher Self reigns, then you will stay steadfast despite the fact that Theosophy ceases to mean anything to you for the time being, that membership of The Theosophical Society ceases to mean anything to you, and you wonder how you could have possibly followed X, Y and Z who now mean nothing to you. But those who have brought down into the waking consciousness a glimpse of the Eternal Plan can never lose it, and will rise superior to their beliefs, to

their prejudices, to their principles, of an incarnation.

Whoso hath felt the Spirit of the Highest
 Cannot confound nor doubt him nor deny :
 Yea with one voice o world, tho' thou deniest,
 Stand thou on that side, for on this am I.

It is very wonderful when you find here and there an individual who will to the end be true to the real amidst the presence of the unreal despite all dimming circumstances. Such people are very rare. Are we among the rarities? We can only answer: I hope indeed I am. But if the Spirit of the Highest has ever taken up its abode in us, even if only for a moment, then there will be the Eternal Memory which will transcend all our smaller memories and keep us on the straight way despite our smaller and vacillating selves of mind, feelings, and body.

I want to bear all things bravely, to endure all things patiently, and to meet all things smilingly—knowing that all true soldiers in Their Army of Light are ever happy and steadfast.

I want to play Their Game, according to Their rules, not mine according to my rules.

I do not want to see the goal, nor do I want to see the triumph. I want to do my bit and to do it well, to Their satisfaction. I want to be so adaptable, so impersonal, so understanding, that I can do anything at any time, change from any work to any other work, and change from one presentation of Truth to another, knowing the infinitudes of presentations.

Today I will stand for Democracy. Tomorrow I will stand for Autocracy. Today I will stand for Monarchy. Tomorrow for a Republic. We must remember that the Elder Brethren do not work merely on single tracks. They work on multitudes of tracks and use many permutations and combinations of Truth in order to fulfil the Goal which is the consummation of them all. Deep down in everything there is the Truth to be found. Nowhere is there no Truth. Nowhere is there no Life. And while it is our business to be dogmatic, to be iconoclastic, even sometimes to appear intolerant and without understanding, we must be ready to switch off from one particular aspect of duty to another as may be required. We must be to the Plan what the Plan needs. I am not a democrat

by nature but democracy is the way in which the world is being educated at the present time and the Hitlers, the Mussolinis and other dictators are the whips wherewith the Inner Government of the world chastises us for our forgetfulness of its principles. We need the Hitlers, the Mussolinis and other hard rulers, as India needed more than one Viceroy, to awaken us to our duty. Because they do not represent the forward movement in the world's evolution, we must denounce them with all fervour. But at the same time they are unconscious messengers of the Masters' purposes and in their organisations we can find much that is useful to copy.

I am far more than my intuitions, far more than my thoughts and convictions, far more than my emotions and feelings and desires, far more than my habits.

It is very important to realize that we are not restricted by what we are feeling and dreaming at the moment. In the circle of our lives we are outside, beyond the aspects of ourselves within the four corners of this particular incarnation. Whatever thought we think, we are greater than such thoughts. Whatever feelings, desires or aspirations we have, we are nobler still.

We must always be outside even those qualities which perhaps seem to restrict us least. One of the best examples is our knowledge of a Master. The Master we know today is a very different Being from the Master we shall know in ten years' time if in the meantime we are growing. The difference is not in Them, but there is more in us to look. Whatever we think or feel now, we have within us better thoughts to think, finer feelings to express. If we can only realize that we are more than the whole of ourselves that we are expressing down here, we are much better fit to help the Elder Brethren.

It is this " I " that I offer to my superiors, an " I " nearer to Them than any content of any lower body.

If we can rise outside ourselves and extend ourselves beyond ourselves, and offer that to them, then we are making our offering as splendid as it possibly can be made.

I want them to be able to use this " I ", guide me, direct me, send me hither and thither to espouse this cause or that, to speak this word or that, without reference

to the lives the smaller "I" may be living with their manifold persuasions.

I want to change, I want to be inconsistent, I want to be different, if by so doing I can reflect more nearly the Will of my Superiors.

Our business is to see what is to be done and to do it. Then when something else is wanted, to do that without feeling we are inconsistent. Unless an individual can be finely inconsistent, he is not growing. I would almost say that consistency is the quality of the static, inconsistency a quality of the dynamic. If an individual says, "I agree with you and have thought that very thing for years and years and years," one wonders why he is not ringing the change with other thoughts, other ideas.

I want to be a channel for Their Will, and not a consistent advocate of my personal assurances.

This is my apologia, the expression of the whole of my being, my Charter. Sometime during the coming week, why do you not take time for quietude and establish your own charter of purposes, after having very carefully forgotten this one?

What is the Charter of *your* Freedom, of *your* Service? What is your purpose for what you are? At such a time as this you have come into the world to be such a soldier in Their Army of Light. They do not need you so sorely at other times of less stress and storm. You have come to be a soldier more than ever. What is the spirit of your soldiership that you now offer to Them? It is not a question of age, health or ill-health, equipment or lack of equipment. What can you give? Each one of you has something which you are expected to give. Otherwise you would not be in The Theosophical Society. Never mind your weakness or your inhibitions, your incapacities. What can you say in one sentence as to your purpose? But it must be a sentence large with your life and large no less with your determination.

But let no one ever make a Charter of himself without fulfilling it as best he can. When you try to give a form to your offering to Them, it is in fact an invocation of your Higher Self, and in these days we need the whole hearts of everyone for Them and for Their work.

George S. Arundale

Printed and published by C. Subbarayudu at the
Vasanta Press, Adyar, Madras.